

CUP AND LID COMBINATION

Technical Field

This invention is concerned with improving the handling of nestable cups and lids for those cups.

5 Background Art

It is customary to configure disposable soft drink cups so that each cup can be nested in a like cup beneath it in a stack. This greatly reduces the storage space for multiple cups. Such cups are rarely supplied with lids in place on the open mouth of the cups because this would preclude the cups being nested. Hence, the lids are usually supplied and stored in a container
10 separate from the container for the cups. And, thus, the cups and lids must be handled separately and brought together for use.

In the prior art United States patent No. 6,176,420, granted January 23, 2001 to G. E. Sarson et al. for "Disposable Cup With Spill Resistant Lid" proposes to configure the cup with an integral lid that can be folded between a raised position and a semi-closed position. The
15 construction does not allow the cup opening to be fully and reliably closed.

P. S. Takacs in his United States patent No. 5,244,106, granted September 14, 1993 for

"Bottle Incorporating Cap Holder" proposed to store the cap for a bottle in a recess in the base of the bottle. Of course, such an arrangement is not nestable with other like bottles.

United States patent No. 6,047,852 granted April 11, 2000 to M. G. Evans et al. for "Hot Beverage Lid With Thermal Flex-Guards" proposed attaching the lid to flaps or a cylinder of heat insulating material at the wall of the cup. Again, if the cups are nested for storage the lid must be stored and handled separately.

There continues to be a need for a cup and lid combination in which these items can be stored together in a nested condition.

Disclosure of the Invention

This invention proposes to provide a recess in the frustroconical wall of a nestable cup to house and retain for use a lid for the cup. The wall of the cup is preferably configured to releasably retain the lid in the recess. There may also be provided a flexible tether connecting the lid to the cup so the lid does not fall free of the cup when removed from the recess. Further, the lid may be provided with a tab to facilitate removal of the lid from the recess.

Brief Description of the Drawings

The invention is described in greater detail hereinafter by reference to the accompanying drawings wherein:

Fig. 1 is an elevational view of a cup/lid combination incorporating this invention;

Fig. 2 is a side elevational view of the cup; and

Fig. 3 is an enlarged partial sectional view of the cup/lid combination taken generally as indicated by line 3-3 in Fig. 2.

Best Modes for Carrying Out The Invention

5 In the drawings the numeral 11 designates generally the cup and numeral 12 designates generally the lid for the cup.

Cup 11 is a nestable variety, meaning that it can be stacked with a cup nesting inside a cup therebeneath in a stack. To this end cup 11 has a frustroconical wall 13 with a closed bottom 14 and an open top 15. The cup preferably has a thickened or rolled lip 16 at the open top 15.

10 The wall 13 of cup 11 has a circular recess 17 therein for receiving the lid 12. In the view of the recess 17 there are provided one or more pairs of oppositely disposed nubs 18 which are adapted to overlies and retain the periphery 19 of the lid 12 when it is positioned within recess 17. (Only one such nub 18 is shown in the drawings at Fig. 2 and in enlarged section in Fig. 3.)

Both the cup 11 and the lid 12 are preferably formed of thin wall flexible plastic materials
15 thus enabling the lid 12 to be bent and flexed in placing it in recess 17 beneath cup nubs 18 and to likewise flex when the lid 12 is snapped out of the recess 17 for use in covering the open top 15 of the cup.

If desired a tab 20 may be affixed to or be integral with the lid 12 to facilitate removing the lid from the cup wall recess 17.

20 Also, if desired the combination may include a flexible tether 21 providing a connection

between the lid and the cup. The tether 21 prevents the lid from flying free when it is pulled from the recess 17 in the cup wall 13.

From the foregoing it should be apparent that with the cup lid 12 nestled within the recess 17 of the cup wall 13 the cup and lid can be nested within another like cup/lid combination for stacked storage and dispensing.

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